

IN THE CLAIMS

1 (Original). A method comprising:

converting a metal silicide into a metal silicate; and
selectively removing the metal silicate.

2 (Original). The method of claim 1 including selectively removing the metal silicate using a wet etchant.

3 (Original). The method of claim 2 including selectively removing the metal silicate using a wet etchant at a temperature between 25 and 120°C.

4 (Original). The method of claim 1 converting a metal silicide into a metal silicate using oxidation.

5 (Original). The method of claim 4 including using a metal oxidant selected from the group including hydrogen peroxide, R_2O_2 , where R is an organic substituent, O_3 or O_2 .

6 (Original). The method of claim 1 including converting a metal silicide on a polysilicon gate electrode into a metal silicate, selectively removing the metal silicate, and thereafter removing the polysilicon gate electrode.

7 (Original). A method comprising:

forming at least two polysilicon gate electrodes;
forming a metal silicide on said gate electrodes;
converting the metal silicide on one of said gate electrodes to a metal silicate and
selectively removing the metal silicate; and
removing the exposed polysilicon gate electrode.

8 (Original). The method of claim 7 including selectively removing the metal silicate using a wet etchant.

9 (Original). The method of claim 8 including selectively removing the metal silicate using a wet etchant at a temperature between 25 and 120°C.

10 (Original). The method of claim 7 including converting a metal silicide into a metal silicate using oxidation.

11 (Original). The method of claim 10 including using a metal oxidant selected from the group including hydrogen peroxide, R_2O_2 , where R is an organic substituent, O_3 or O_2 .

Claims 12-16 (Canceled).

17 (Currently Amended). A method comprising:
converting a metal germanide into a metal ~~germinate~~ germanate; and
selectively removing the metal ~~germinate~~ germanate.

18 (Currently Amended). The method of claim 17 including selectively removing the metal ~~germinate~~ germanate using a wet etchant.

19 (Currently Amended). The method of claim 18 including selectively removing the metal ~~germinate~~ germanate using a wet etchant at a temperature between 25 and 120°C.

20 (Currently Amended). The method of claim 17 converting a metal germanide into a metal ~~germinate~~ germanate using oxidation.

21 (Original). The method of claim 20 including using a metal oxidant selected from the group including hydrogen peroxide, R_2O_2 , where R is an organic substituent, O_3 or O_2 .

22 (Currently Amended). The method of claim 17 including converting a metal germanide on a polysilicon gate electrode into a metal ~~germinate~~ germanate, selectively removing the metal ~~germinate~~ germanate, and thereafter removing the polysilicon gate electrode.

23 (Currently Amended). A method comprising:
forming at least two gate electrodes;
forming a metal germanide on said gate electrodes;
converting the metal germanide on one of said gate electrodes to a metal ~~germinate~~ germanate and selectively removing the metal ~~germinate~~ germanate; and
removing the exposed gate electrode.

24 (Currently Amended). The method of claim 23 including selectively removing the metal ~~germinate~~ germanate using a wet etchant.

25 (Currently Amended). The method of claim 24 including selectively removing the metal ~~germinate~~ germanate using a wet etchant at a temperature between 25 and 120°C.

26 (Currently Amended). The method of claim 23 including converting a metal germanide into a metal ~~germinate~~ germanate using oxidation.

27 (Original). The method of claim 26 including using a metal oxidant selected from the group including hydrogen peroxide, R_2O_2 , where R is an organic substituent, O_3 or O_2 .

Claims 28-32 (Canceled).